



**Kealakekua Bay**

**“Harbor Of Death – Captain James Cook”  
This is a historical work  
based on the public domain book  
“Narrative of the Death of Captain Cook”  
by David Samwell, Surgeon of The ship Discovery  
with edits, images, arrangement  
by Larry W Jones**

**Copyright 2024 © by Larry W Jones**

**All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced  
or used in any manner without written permission of the  
copyright owner except for quotations in a book review.**

**First edition - 2024**

**Book design by Larry W Jones**

**Published by lulu.com**

**ISBN – 978-1-304-51181-2**

## Harbor Of Death – Captain James Cook

In the month of January, 1779, the "Resolution" and "Discovery" lay about a fortnight at anchor in the bay of Kerag,e,goo,ah (Kealahkekua), in the Island of Ou-why-ee (Hawaii). During that time, the ships were most plentifully supplied with provisions by natives, with whom we lived on the most friendly terms. We were universally treated by them with kind attention and hospitality; but the respect they paid to Captain Cook, was little short of adoration. It was, therefore, with sentiments of the most perfect good-will towards the inhabitants, that we left the harbour, on the fourth of February. It was Captain Cook's intention to visit the other islands to leeward, and we stood to the westward, towards Mowee (Maui), attended by several canoes full of people, who were willing to accompany us as far as they could, before they bade us a final adieu.



### HMS Resolution and Discovery

**(Note)** *HMS Resolution* was a sloop of the Royal Navy, a converted merchant collier (coal carrier) purchased by the Navy and adapted, in which Captain James Cook made his second and third voyages of exploration in the Pacific. She impressed him enough that he called her "the ship of my choice", and "the fittest for service of any I have seen".

**(Note) HMS Discovery** was the consort ship of James Cook's third expedition to the Pacific Ocean in 1776–1780. Like Cook's other ships, Discovery was a Whitby-built collier originally named Diligence when she was built in 1774. Purchased in 1775, the vessel was measured at 299 tons burthen. Originally a brig, Cook had her changed to a full-rigged ship. She was commanded by Charles Clerke, who had previously served on Cook's first two expeditions, and had a complement of 70. After Cook was killed in a skirmish following his attempted kidnapping of Hawaiian leader Kalani'ōpu'u, Clerke transferred to the expedition's flagship HMS Resolution and John Gore assumed command of Discovery. She returned to Britain under the command of Lieutenant James King, arriving back on 4 October 1780.



On January 6th, we were overtaken by a gale of wind; and the next night, the "Resolution" had the misfortune of springing the head of her foremast, in such a dangerous manner, that Captain Cook was obliged to return to Keragegoah (Kealahakua), in order to have it repaired; for we could find no other convenient harbour on the island. The same gale had occasioned much distress among some canoes, that had paid a visit from the shore. One of them, with two men and a child on board, was picked up by the "Resolution," and rescued from destruction: the men, having toiled hard all night, in attempting to reach the land, were so much exhausted, that they could hardly mount the ship's side. When they got upon the quarter-deck, they burst into tears, and seemed much affected with the dangerous situation from which they had escaped; but the little child appeared lively and cheerful. One of the "Resolution's" boats was also so fortunate as to save a man and two women, whose canoe had been upset by the violence of the waves. They were brought on board, and, with the others, partook of the kindness and humanity of Captain Cook.





**(Note) Captain Charles Clerke** (22 August 1741 – 22 August 1779) was an officer in the Royal Navy who sailed on four voyages of exploration, three with Captain James Cook. When Cook was killed during his 3rd expedition to the Pacific, Clerke took command but died later in the voyage from tuberculosis. Clerke started studying at the Royal Naval Academy in Portsmouth when he was 13. During the Seven Years' War he served aboard HMS Dorsetshire and HMS Bellona. He was in the mizzen-top of HMS Bellona when the mast was shot away in 1761 and he became the only survivor of those who consequently fell overboard. Clerke's last three voyages were all under the command of Captain James Cook. He started the first voyage aboard HM Bark Endeavour (1768–1771) as a master's mate.

Cook promoted him to acting lieutenant in 1771, and he was officially confirmed in that rank on 31 July 1771. He was HMS Resolution's second lieutenant on Cook's second voyage (1772–1775). While ashore between Cook's 2nd and 3rd voyages Clerke agreed to serve time in the King's Bench debtor's prison for a debt one of his brothers, Sir John Clerke had incurred. While in debtor's prison he was infected with the tuberculosis that eventually killed him.



### King's Bench Prison

**(Note) The King's Bench Prison** was a prison in Southwark, south London, England, from medieval times until it closed in 1880. It took its name from the King's Bench court of law in which cases of defamation, bankruptcy and other misdemeanours were heard; as such, the prison was often used as a debtor's prison until the practice was abolished in the 1860s. In 1842, it was renamed the Queen's Bench Prison, and became the Southwark Convict Prison in 1872

For Cook's third expedition, Clerke was placed in command of HMS Discovery, receiving this command on 26 August 1775. When Cook was killed in a skirmish with Hawaiians on 14 February 1779, Clerke took command of the expedition and of HMS Resolution. He continued the expedition's exploration of the Northern Pacific coast, searching for a navigable Northwest Passage. The expedition then proceeded to the Pacific coast of Siberia. Lieutenant James King, one of his subordinates, wrote that Clerke's illness had reduced him to skeletal thinness.

On 10 August 1779, Clerke wrote in a letter to Sir Joseph Banks that, "The disorder I was attacked with in the King's bench prison has proved consumptive, with which I have battled with various [unclear] although without one single days health since I took leave of you ... it has now so far got the better of me that I am not able to turn myself in bed, so that my stay in this world must be of very short duration." Clerke died from tuberculosis on his 38th birthday (22 August 1779) en route to Kamchatka from the Bering Strait. He was buried in Kamchatka on 29 August 1779. Clerke's second in command, Lieutenant John Gore took command of the expedition as captain of Resolution, appointing King as captain of Discovery. The expedition then sailed via China and the Sunda Strait to Cape Town, returning to England in August 1780.



**(Note)** *Kealahou Bay* is located on the Kona coast of the island of Hawai'i about 12 miles (19 km) south of Kailua-Kona. Settled over a thousand years ago, the surrounding area contains many archeological and historical sites such as religious temples (*heiau*) and also includes the spot where the first documented European to reach the Hawaiian islands, Captain James Cook, was killed. The sheer cliff face called *Ka-pali-poko—a-Manuahi* overlooking the bay houses burials of Hawaiian royalty and their accompanied companions and funerary items. The northwestern part of the cliff is called *Ka-pali-kapu-o-Keoua*. The name means "sacred cliffs of Keōua " in honor of Keōua Nui. He was sometimes known as the "father of kings" since many rulers were his descendants.

The difficulty in accessing the cliff kept the exact burial places secret. The village of *Ka'awaloa* was at the north end of the bay in ancient times, where the *Puhina O Lono Heiau* was built, along with some royal residences. The name of the village means "the distant Kava", from the medicinal plant used in religious rituals. The name of the bay comes from *ke ala ke kua* in the Hawaiian Language which means "the god's pathway." This area was the focus of extensive *Makahiki* celebrations.

On the morning of Wednesday, January 10, 1779, we were within a few miles of the harbour; and were soon joined by several canoes, in which appeared many of our old acquaintances; who seemed to have come to welcome us back. Among them was *Coo,aha* (*Kuaha*), a priest: he had brought a small pig, and some cocoa nuts in his hand, which, after having chaunted a few sentences, he presented to Captain Clerke. He then left us, and hastened on board the "Resolution," to perform the same friendly



ceremony before Captain Cook. Having but light winds all that day, we could not gain the harbour. In the afternoon, a chief with the first rank, and nearly related to Kariopoo (Kalaniopuu), paid us a visit on board the "Discovery." His name was Ka,mea,mea (Kamehameha): he was dressed in a very rich feathered cloke, which he seemed to have brought for sale, but would part with it for nothing except iron daggers. These, the chiefs, some time before our departure, had preferred to every other article; for having received a plentiful supply of hatchets and other tools, they began to collect a store of warlike instruments. Kameamea (Kamehameha) procured nine daggers for his cloke, and being pleased with his reception, he and his attendants slept on board that night.



**Feathered cloak associated with Kalani'opu'u**



**(Note)** *Kalani'ōpu'u-a-Kaiamamao (c. 1729 – April 1782) was the ali'i nui (supreme monarch) of the island of Hawai'i. He was called Terreeoboo, King of Owhyhee by James Cook and other Europeans. His name has also been written as Kaleiopuu. Kalani'ōpu'u was the son of Kalaninuiamamao and his wife Kamaka'īmoku, a high ranking ali'i wahine (female of hereditary nobility) who was also the mother of Keōua with another husband named Kalanike'eaumoku. This made her the grandmother of Kamehameha I. During his reign, Alapainui had kept the two young princes, Kalani'ōpu'u and Keōua, close to him out of either kindness or for political reasons. Kalani'ōpu'u-a-Kaiamamao was the king of the island when Captain James Cook came to Hawai'i, and the king went aboard Cook's ship on November 26, 1778.*

*After Cook anchored at Kealakekua Bay in January 1779, Kalani'ōpu'u-a-Kaiamamao paid a ceremonial visit on January 26, 1779, and exchanged gifts including a 'ahu'ula (feathered cloak) and mahiole (ceremonial helmet), since it was during the Makahiki season. Cook's ships returned on February 11 to repair storm damage. This time relations were not as good, resulting in a violent struggle when Cook tried to take Kalani'ōpu'u hostage after the theft of a longboat, which led to Cook's death. Kalani'ōpu'u-a-Kaiamamao died at Kā'iliki'i, Waio'ahukini, Ka'ū, in April 1782. He was succeeded by his son, Kīwala'ō, as king of Hawai'i island; and his nephew, Kamehameha I, who was given guardianship of Kū-ka-ili-moku, the god of war. His nephew would eventually overthrow his son at the battle of Moku'ōhai. The island of Hawai'i was then effectively divided into three parts: his nephew Kamehameha ruled the western districts, his younger son Keōua Kuahuula controlled Ka'ū, and his brother Keawemauihili controlled Hilo.*

In the morning of the eleventh of February, the ships anchored again in Keragegooah bay (Kealakekua Bay), and preparation was immediately made for landing the "Resolution's" foremast. We were visited but by few of the Indians, because there were but few in the bay. On our departure, those belonging to other parts, had repaired to their several habitations, and were again to collect from various quarters, before we could expect to be surrounded by such multitudes as we had once seen in that harbour.

In the afternoon I walked about a mile into the country, to visit an Indian friend, who had, a few days before, come near twenty miles, in a small canoe, to see me, while the ship lay becalmed. As the canoe had not left us long before a gale of wind came on, I was alarmed for the consequence; however, I had the pleasure to find that my friend had escaped unhurt, though not without some difficulties. I take notice of this short excursion, merely because it afforded me an opportunity of observing, that there appeared no change in the disposition or behaviour of the inhabitants. I saw nothing that could induce me to think, that they were displeased with our return, or jealous of the intention of our second visit. On the contrary, that abundant good nature which had always characterised them, seemed still to glow in every bosom, and to animate every countenance.

The next day, February the twelfth, the ships were put under a taboo, by the chiefs, a solemnity, it seems, that was requisite to be observed before Kariopoo (Kalaniopuu), the king, paid his first visit to Captain Cook, after his return. He waited upon him the same day, on board the "Resolution," attended by a large train, some of which bore

the presents designed for Captain Cook, who received him in his usual friendly manner, and gave him several articles in return. This amicable ceremony being settled, the taboo was dissolved, matters went on in the usual train, and the next day, February the thirteenth, we were visited by the natives in great numbers; the "Resolution's" mast was landed, and the astronomical observatories erected on their former situation. I landed, with another gentleman, at the town of Kavaroa (Kaawaloa), where we found a great number of canoes, just arrived from different parts of the island, and the Indians busy in constructing temporary huts on the beach, for their residence during the stay of the ships.



**(Note)** *Ka `awaloa, at one time a Hawaiian village and royal residence on Kealakekua Bay's northern edge. It was the home of Hawaii's most royal hosts and hostesses during the last quarter of the 18th century.*

*In 1779, Ka `awaloa was a thriving village of grass thatched houses, tidy stone walls, an important temple complex, healthy coconut palms, and numerous inhabitants.*

*The tall white spire to the left is the concrete monument*

*erected to Cook's memory in 1874 by men aboard HMS Scout, a British naval vessel which came to the islands carrying that country's Transit of Venus scientific expedition.*

*British Commissioner Wodehouse traveled on board HMS Scout from Honolulu to Kona to see Cook's memorial obelisk erected. Up until that time, much to Britain's disgrace, Cook's only monument at the place of his death was a coconut stump. Over the years, visiting sea captains had covered the stump with copper sheets taken from the hulls of their ships, inscribing dates and names in the soft metal.*

*When American Mark Twain visited Kaawaloa in 1866, he mocked the mighty empire that remembered Cook with such a miserable edifice. Perhaps his sarcastic words spurred the British Empire to erect the monument.*

On our return on board the "Discovery," we learned that an Indian had been detected in stealing the armourer's tongs from the forge, for which he received a pretty severe flogging, and was sent out of the ship. Notwithstanding the example made of this man, in the afternoon another had the audacity to snatch the tongs and a chisel from the same place, with which he jumped overboard, and swam for the shore. The master and a midshipman were instantly dispatched after him, in the small cutter. The Indian seeing himself pursued, made for a canoe: his countrymen took him on board, and paddled as swift as they could towards the shore; we fired several muskets at them, but to no effect, for they soon got out of the reach of our shot.

Pareah (Palea), one of the chiefs, who was at that time on board the "Discovery," understanding what had happened, immediately went ashore, promising to bring back the stolen goods. Our boat was so far distanced, in chasing the canoe which had taken the chief on board, that he had time to make his escape into the country.

**(Note)** *Having returned to make repairs to a broken mast, an ominous quiet everywhere prevailed. No one greeted them. A boat being sent ashore to inquire the cause, returned with the information that King Kalaniopu'u was away, and had left the bay under a strict taboo. During the king's absence the chiefs Palea and Kana'ina kept order among the people. After Cook's ships had anchored, the chiefs came on board and informed Cook that Kalaniopu'u would be back in a few days. Another prominent man, Koa, was apparently the highest officiating priest of the place, in the absence of the high-priest who accompanied Kalaipou'u.*

Captain Cook, who was then on shore, endeavoured to intercept his landing; but it seems, that he was led out of the way by some of the natives, who had officiously intruded themselves as guides. As the master was approaching near the landing-place, he was met by some of the Indians in a canoe; they had brought back the tongs and chisel, together with another article, that we had not missed, which happened to be the lid of the water-cask. Having recovered these things, he was returning on board, when he was met by the "Resolution's" pinnace, with five men in her, who, without any orders, had come from the observatories to his assistance.

Being thus unexpectedly reinforced, he thought himself strong enough to insist upon having the thief, or the canoe which took him in, delivered up as reprimands. With that view he turned back; and having found the canoe on the beach, he was preparing to launch it into the water when Pareah (Palea) made his appearance, and insisted upon his not taking it away, as it was his property. The officer not regarding him, the chief seized upon him, pinioned his arms behind, and held him by the hair of his head: on which, one of the sailors struck him with an oar.

Pareah (Palea) instantly quitted the officer, snatched the oar out of the man's hand, and snapped it in two across his knee. At length, the multitude began to attack our people with stones. They made some resistance, but were soon overpowered, and obliged to swim for safety to the small cutter, which lay farther out than the pinnace. The officers, not being expert swimmers, retreated to a small rock in the water, where they were closely pursued by the Indians. One man darted a broken oar at the master; but his foot slipping at the time, he missed him, which fortunately saved that officer's life.



At last, Pareah (Palea) interfered, and put an end to their violence. The Gentlemen, knowing that his presence was their only defense against the fury of the natives, entreated him to stay with them, till they could get off in the boats; but that he refused, and left them. The master went to seek assistance from the party at the observatories; but the midshipman chose to remain in the pinnace. He was very rudely treated by the mob, who plundered the boat of everything that was loose on board, and then began to knock her to pieces, for the sake of the ironwork.

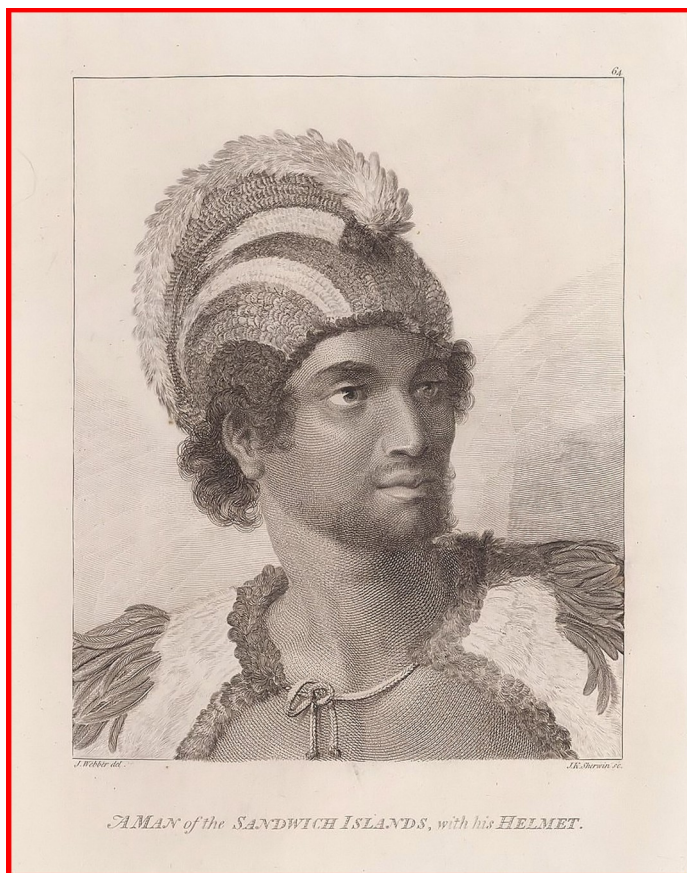
But Pareah (Palea) fortunately returned in time to prevent her destruction. He had met the other gentleman on his way to the obser-

vatories, and suspecting his errand, had forced him to return. He dispersed the crowd again, and desired the gentlemen to return on board; they represented, that all the oars had been taken out of the boat: on which he brought some of them back, and the gentlemen were glad to get off, without further molestation. They had not proceeded far, before they were overtaken by Pareah (Palea), in a canoe; he delivered the midshipman's cap, which had been taken from him in the scuffle, joined noses with them, in token of reconciliation, and was anxious to know, if Captain Cook would kill him for what had happened. They assured him of the contrary, and made signs of friendship to him in return. He then left them, and paddled over to the town of Kavaroah (Kaawaloa), and that was the last time we ever saw him. Captain Cook returned on board soon after, much displeased with the whole of this disagreeable business; and the same night, sent a lieutenant on board the "Discovery," to learn the particulars of it, as it had originated in that ship.

It was remarkable, that in the midst of the hurry and confusion attending this affair, Kanynah (Kanaina), a chief who had always been on terms particularly friendly with us, came from the spot where it happened, with a hog to sell on board the "Discovery:" it was of an extraordinary large size, and he demanded for it a pahowa (pahoa), or dagger, of an unusual length. He pointed to us, that it must be as long as his arm. Captain Clerke not having one of that length, told him, he would get one made for him by the morning; with which being satisfied, he left the hog, and went ashore without making any stay with us. It will not be altogether foreign to the subject, to mention a circumstance, that happened to-day on board the "Resolution." An Indian Chief asked Captain Cook at his table, if he was a Tata Toa (Hakaka Koa); which means a fighting man, or a soldier. Being answered in the affirmative, he desired to see his wounds: Captain Cook held out his right-hand, which had a scar upon it, dividing the thumb from the finger, the whole length of the metacarpal bones.



The Indian, being thus convinced of his being a Toa (Koa), put the same question to another gentleman present, but he happened to have none of those distinguishing marks: the chief then said, that he himself was a Toa (Koa), and showed the scars of some wounds he had received in battle. Those who were on duty at the observatories, were disturbed during the night, with shrill and melancholy sounds, issuing from the adjacent villages, which they took to be the lamentations of the women. Perhaps the quarrel between us, might have filled their minds with apprehensions for the safety of their husbands: but, be that as it may, their mournful cries struck the sentinels with unusual awe and terror.



**(Note)** Kalaimanokaho'owaha (also known as Kana'ina) was an ali'i high chief of Hawaii during Captain James Cook's visit to the islands. He was the chief said to have struck the first blow to Cook when he attempted to kidnap Kalani'ōpu'u, the king of the island. He was called Kana'ina nui (an ali'i title) as a birthright from his father, Keawe'opala, first born son of Alapainui. After his father was killed by Kalani'ōpu'u, he would serve the new king as a kaukau ali'i, a service class of Hawaiian nobility that his mother, Moana Wahine had descended from. This ali'i service line would continue throughout the Kingdom of Hawaii. He was given the nickname ka na'ina which, in the Hawaiian language means: "The conquering".

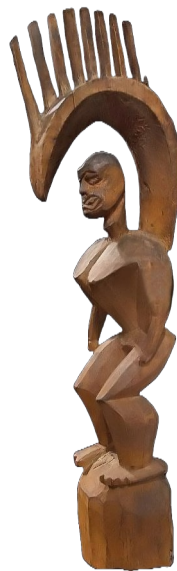


**(Note)** The name *Ha'akoa* refers to the bent knee dance of the brave and fearless warrior, or simply, *Dance of the Warrior*. The Hawaiian elite warriors commonly known as the *Koa*, were the main tools for the chiefs, and were their most trained and skilled warriors. Their name originated from the tree they would use to fashion their weapons, the *Koa* tree.

To widen the breach between us, some of the Indians in the night, took away the "Discovery's" large cutter, which lay swamped at the buoy of one of her anchors: they had carried her off so quietly, that we did not miss her till the morning, Sunday, February the fourteenth. Captain Clerke lost no time in waiting upon Captain Cook, to acquaint him with the accident; he returned on board, with orders for the launch and small cutter to go, under the command of the second lieutenant, and lie off the east point of the bay, in order to intercept all canoes that might attempt to get out; and, if he found it necessary, to fire upon them.

At the same time, the third lieutenant of the "Resolution," with the launch and small cutter, was sent on the same service, to the opposite point of the bay; and the master was dispatched in the large cutter, in pursuit of a double canoe, already under sail, making the best of her way out of the harbour. He soon came up with her, and by firing a few muskets, drove her on shore, and the Indians left her: this happened to be the canoe of Omea (Mea), a man who bore the title of Orono (Lono).

**(Note)** The god Lono is associated with fertility, agriculture, rainfall, music and peace. In one of the many Hawaiian stories of Lono, he is a fertility and music god who descended to Earth on a rainbow to marry Laka. In agricultural and planting traditions, Lono was identified with rain and food plants. He was one of the four gods (with Kū, Kāne, and Kāne's twin brother Kanaloa) who existed before the world was created. Lono was also the god of peace. In his honor, the great annual festival of the Makahiki was held. During this period (from October through February), war and unnecessary work was kapu (forbidden). Captain James Cook was viewed as Lono's incarnation, which may have later caused Cook's death. A Hawaiian god or "an ak[ua] is a being of nature, one of immense power, which may be an invisible spirit or a living person." It would not be abnormal for an akua to journey across an ocean, or physically appear.



He was on board himself, and it would have been fortunate, if our people had secured him, for his person was held as sacred as that of the king. During this time, Captain Cook was preparing to go ashore himself, at the town of Kavaroah (Kaawaloa), in order to secure the person of Kariopoo (Kalaniopuu), before he should have time to withdraw himself to another part of the island, out of our reach. This appeared the most effectual step that could be taken on the present occasion, for the recovery of the boat.



**The ship Endeavor's Longboat**

It was the measure he had invariably pursued, in similar cases, at other islands in these seas, and it had always been attended with the desired success: in fact, it would be difficult to point out any other mode of proceeding on these emergencies, likely to attain the object in view. We had reason to suppose, that the king and his attendants had fled when the alarm was first given; in that case, it was Captain Cook's intention to secure the large canoes which were hauled upon the beach. He left the ship about seven o'clock, attended by the lieutenant of marines, a serjeant, corporal, and seven private men: the pinnacle's crew were also armed, and under the command of Mr. Roberts.

As they rowed towards the shore, Captain Cook ordered the launch to leave her station at the west point of the bay, in order to assist his own boat. This is a circumstance worthy of notice; for it clearly shows, that he was not unapprehensive of meeting with resistance from the natives; or unmindful of the necessary preparation for the safety of himself and his people. I will venture to say, that from the appearance of things, just at that time, there was not one, beside himself, who judged that such precaution was absolutely requisite; so little did his conduct on the occasion bear the marks of rashness, or a precipitate self-confidence!

He landed, with the marines, at the upper end of the town of Kavaroa (Kaawaloa): the Indians immediately flocked round, as usual, and showed him the customary marks of respect, by prostrating themselves before him. There were no signs of hostilities, or much alarm among them. Captain Cook, however, did not seem willing to trust to appearances; but was particularly attentive to the disposition of the marines, and to have them kept clear of the crowd. He first enquired for the king's sons, two youths who were much attached to him, and generally his companions on board.

Messengers being sent for them, they soon came to him, and informing him that their father was asleep, at a house not far from them, he accompanied them thither, and took the marines along with them. As he passed along, the natives every where prostrated themselves before him, and seemed to have lost no part of that respect they had always shown to his person. He was joined by several chiefs, among whom was Kanynah (Kanaina), and his brother Koohowroah (Kuhaulua). They kept the crowd in order, according to their usual custom; and being ignorant of his intention in coming on shore, frequently asked him if he wanted any hogs, or other provisions; he told them that he did not, and that his business was to see the king.

When he arrived at the house he ordered some of the Indians to go in, and inform Kariopoo (Kalaniopuu), that he waited without to speak with him. They came out two or three times, and instead of returning any answer from the king, presented some pieces of red cloth to him, which made Captain Cook suspect that he was not in the house; he therefore desired the lieutenant of marines to go in. The lieutenant found the old man just awaked from sleep, and seemingly alarmed at the message; but he came out without hesitation. Captain Cook took him by the hand, and in a friendly manner, asked him to go on board, to which he very readily consented.

Thus far matters appeared in a favourable train, and the natives did not seem much alarmed or apprehensive of hostility on our side; at which Captain Cook expressed himself a little surprized, saying, that as the inhabitants of that town appeared innocent of stealing the cutter, he should not molest them, but that he must get the king



on board. Kariopoo (Kalaniopuu) sat down before his door, and was surrounded by a great crowd: Kanynah (Kanaina) and his brother were both very active in keeping order among them. In a little time, however, the Indians were observed arming themselves with long spears, clubs, and daggers, and putting on thick mats, which they use as armour. This hostile appearance increased, and became more alarming, on the arrival of two men in a canoe from the opposite side of the bay, with the news of a chief, called Kareemoo (Kalimo), having been killed by one of the "Discovery's" boats, in their passage across: they had also delivered this account to each of the ships.

Upon that information, the women, who were sitting upon the beach at their breakfasts, and conversing familiarly with our people in the boats, retired, and a confused murmur spread through the crowd. An old priest came to Captain Cook, with a cocoa nut in his hand, which he held out to him as a present, at the same time singing very loud. He was often desired to be silent, but in vain: he continued importunate and troublesome, and there was no such thing as getting rid of him or his noise: it seemed, as if he meant to divert their attention from his countrymen, who were growing more tumultuous, and arming themselves in every quarter.

Captain Cook, being at the same time surrounded by a great crowd, thought his situation rather hazardous: he therefore ordered the lieutenant of marines to march his small party to the water-side, where the boats lay within a few yards of the shore: the Indians readily made a lane for them to pass, and did not offer to interrupt them. The distance they had to go might be about fifty or sixty yards; Captain Cook followed, having hold of Kariopoo's (Kalaniopuu's) hand, who accompanied him very willingly: he was attended by his wife, two sons, and several chiefs. The troublesome old priest followed, making the same savage noise. Keowa (Keoua), the younger son, went directly into the pinnace, expecting his father to follow; but just as he arrived at the water-side, his wife threw her arms about his neck, and, with the assistance of two chiefs, forced him to sit down by the side of a double canoe. Captain Cook expostulated with them, but to no purpose: they would not suffer the king to proceed, telling him, that he would be put to death if he went on board the ship. Kariopoo (Kalaniopuu), whose conduct seemed entirely resigned to the will of others, hung down his head, and appeared much distressed.

While the king was in this situation, a chief, well known to us, of the name of Coho (Koho), was observed lurking near, with an iron dagger, partly concealed under his cloke, seemingly, with the intention of stabbing Captain Cook, or the lieutenant of marines. The latter proposed to fire at him, but Captain Cook would not permit it. Coho (Koho) closing upon them, obliged the officer to strike him with his piece, which made him retire. Another Indian laid hold of the serjeant's musket, and endeavoured to wrench it from him, but was prevented by the lieutenant's making a blow at him. Captain Cook, seeing the tumult increase, and the Indians growing more daring and resolute, observed, that if he were to take the king off by force, he could not do it without sacrificing the lives of many of his people.

He then paused a little, and was on the point of giving his order to reembark, when a man threw a stone at him; which he returned with a discharge of small shot, (with which one barrel of his double piece was loaded). The man, having a thick mat before him, received little or no hurt; he brandished his spear, and threatened to dart it at Captain Cook, who being still unwilling to take away his life, instead of firing with

ball, knocked him down with his musket. He expostulated strongly with the most forward of the crowd, upon their turbulent behaviour. He had given up all thoughts of getting the king on board, as it appeared impracticable; and his care was then only to act on the defensive, and to secure a safe embarkation for his small party, which was closely pressed by a body of several thousand people.

Keowa (Keoua), the king's son, who was in the pinnace, being alarmed on hearing the first firing, was, at his own entreaty, put on shore again; for even at that time, Mr. Roberts, who commanded her, did not apprehend that Captain Cook's person was in any danger: otherwise he would have detained the prince, which, no doubt, would have been a great check on the Indians. One man was observed, behind a double canoe, in the action of darting his spear at Captain Cook, who was forced to fire at him in his own defence, but happened to kill another close to him, equally forward in the tumult.

The serjeant, observing that he had missed the man he aimed at, received orders to fire at him, which he did, and killed him. By this time, the impetuosity of the Indians was somewhat repressed; they fell back in a body, and seemed staggered; but being pushed on by those behind, they returned to the charge, and poured a volley of stones among the marines, who, without waiting for orders, returned it with a general discharge of musketry, which was instantly followed by a fire from the boats. At this Captain Cook was heard to express his astonishment: he waved his hand to the boats, called to them to cease firing, and to come nearer in to receive the marines.

Mr. Roberts immediately brought the pinnace as close to the shore as he could, without grounding, notwithstanding the showers of stones that fell among the people; but Mr. John Williamson, the lieutenant, who commanded in the launch, instead of pulling in to the assistance of Captain Cook, withdrew his boat further off, at the moment that everything seems to have depended upon the timely exertions of those in the boats. By his own account, he mistook the signal: but be that as it may, this circumstance appears to me, to have decided the fatal turn of the affair, and to have removed every chance which remained with Captain Cook, of escaping with his life.

The business of saving the marines out of the water, in consequence of that, fell altogether upon the pinnace; which thereby became so much crowded, that the crew were, in a great measure, prevented from using their fire-arms, or giving what assistance they otherwise might have done, to Captain Cook; so that he seems, at the most critical point of time, to have wanted the assistance of both boats, owing to the removal of the launch. For notwithstanding that they kept up a fire on the crowd from the situation to which they removed in that boat, the fatal confusion which ensued on her being withdrawn, to say the least of it, must have prevented the full effect, that the prompt co-operation of the two boats, according to Captain Cook's orders, must have had, towards the preservation of himself and his people.

At that time, it was to the boats alone, that Captain Cook had to look for his safety; for when the marines had fired, the Indians rushed among them, and forced them into the water, where four of them were killed: their lieutenant was wounded, but fortunately escaped, and was taken up by the pinnace. Captain Cook was then the only one remaining on the rock.

He was observed making for the pinnace, holding his left-hand against the back of his head, to guard it from the stones, and carrying his musket under the other arm. An Indian was seen following him, but with caution and timidity; for he stopped once or twice, as if undetermined to proceed. At last he advanced upon him unawares, and with a large club, or common stake, gave him a blow on the back of the head, and then precipitately retreated. The stroke seemed to have stunned Captain Cook: he staggered a few paces, then fell on his hand and one knee, and dropped his musket. As he was rising, and before he could recover his feet, another Indian stabbed him in the back of the neck with an iron dagger. He then fell into a bite of water about knee deep, where others crowded upon him, and endeavoured to keep him under.

But struggling very strongly with them, he got his head up, and casting his look towards the pinnace, seemed to solicit assistance. Though the boat was not above five or six yards distant from him, yet from the crowded and confused state of the crew, it seems, it was not in their power to save him. The Indians got him under again, but in deeper water: he was, however, able to get his head up once more, and being almost spent in the struggle, he naturally turned to the rock, and was endeavouring to support himself by it, when a savage gave him a blow with a club, and he was seen alive no more. They hauled him up lifeless on the rocks, where they seemed to take a savage pleasure in using every barbarity to his dead body, snatching the daggers out of each other's hands, to have the horrid satisfaction of piercing the fallen victim of their barbarous rage.



I need make no reflection on the great loss we suffered on this occasion, or attempt to describe what we felt. It is enough to say, that no man was ever more beloved or admired; and it is truly painful to reflect, that he seems to have fallen a sacrifice merely for want of being properly supported; a fate, singularly to be lamented, as having fallen to his lot, who had ever been conspicuous for his care of those under his command, and who seemed, to the last, to pay as much attention to their preservation, as to that of his own life.

If any thing could have added to the shame and indignation universally felt on the occasion, it was to find, that his remains had been deserted, and left exposed on the beach, although they might have been brought off. It appears, from the information of four or five midshipmen, who arrived on the spot at the conclusion of the fatal business, that the beach was then almost entirely deserted by the Indians, who at length had given way to the fire of the boats, and dispersed through the town: so that there seemed no great obstacle to prevent the recovery of Captain Cook's body; but the lieutenant returned on board without making the attempt. It is unnecessary to dwell longer on this painful subject, and to relate the complaints and censures that fell on the conduct of the lieutenant. It will be sufficient to observe, that they were so loud, as to oblige Captain Clerke publicly to notice them, and to take the depositions of his accusers down in writing. The Captain's bad state of health and approaching dissolution, it is supposed, induced him to destroy these papers a short time before his death.

It is a painful task, to be obliged to notice circumstances, which seem to reflect upon the character of any man. A strict regard to truth, however, compelled me to the insertion of these facts, which I have offered merely as facts, without presuming to connect with them any comment of my own: esteeming it the part of a faithful historian, "to extenuate nothing, nor set down ought in malice."

The fatal accident happened about eight o'clock in the morning, about an hour after Captain Cook landed. It did not seem, that the king, or his sons, were witnesses to it; but it is supposed that they withdrew in the midst of the tumult. The principal actors were the other chiefs, many of them the king's relations and attendants: the man who stabbed him with the dagger was called Nooah (Nuua).

**(Note)** *Nuua was King Kalani'ōpu'u's personal assistant.*

I happened to be the only one who recollected his person, from having on a former occasion mentioned his name in the journal I kept. I was induced to take particular notice of him, more from his personal appearance than any other consideration, though he was of high rank, and a near relation of the king: he was stout and tall, with a fierce look and demeanour, and one who united in his figure the two qualities of strength and agility, in a greater degree, than ever I remembered to have seen before in any other man. His age might be about thirty, and by the white scurf on his skin, and his sore eyes, he appeared to be a hard drinker of Kava (awa). He was a constant companion of the king, with whom I first saw him, when he paid a visit to Captain Clerke. The chief who first struck Captain Cook with the club, was called Karimano-craha (Kalaimanokahoowaha), but I did not know him by his name. These circumstances I learnt of honest Kaireekia (Keliikia), the priest; who added, that they were both held in great esteem on account of that action;



neither of them came near us afterwards. When the boats left the shore, the Indians carried away the dead body of Captain Cook and those of the marines, to the rising ground, at the back of the town, where we could plainly see them with our glasses from the ships.

This most melancholy accident, appears to have been altogether unexpected and unforeseen, as well on the part of the natives as ourselves. I never saw sufficient reason to induce me to believe, that there was any thing of design, or a pre-concerted plan on their side, or that they purposely sought to quarrel with us: thieving, which gave rise to the whole, they were equally guilty of, in our first and second visits. It was the cause of every misunderstanding that happened between us: their petty thefts were generally overlooked, but sometimes slightly punished.

The boat, which they at last ventured to take away, was an object of no small magnitude to people in our situation, who could not possibly replace her, and therefore not slightly to be given up. We had no other chance of recovering her, but by getting the person of the king into our possession: on our attempting to do that, the natives became alarmed for his safety, and naturally opposed those whom they deemed his enemies. In the sudden conflict that ensued, we had the unspeakable misfortune of losing our excellent Commander, in the manner already related. It is in this light the affair has always appeared to me, as entirely accidental, and not in the least owing to any previous offence received, or jealousy of our second visit entertained by the natives.

Pareah (Palea) seems to have been the principal instrument in bringing about this fatal disaster. We learnt afterwards, that it was he who had employed some people to steal the boat: the king did not seem to be privy to it, or even apprized of what had happened, till Captain Cook landed.

It was generally remarked, that at first, the Indians shewed great resolution in facing our fire-arms; but it was entirely owing to ignorance of their effect. They thought that their thick mats would defend them from a ball, as well as from a stone; but being soon convinced of their error, yet still at a loss to account how such execution was done among them, they had recourse to a stratagem, which, though it answered no other purpose, served to show their ingenuity and quickness of invention.

Observing the flashes of the muskets, they naturally concluded, that water would counteract their effect, and therefore, very sagaciously dipped their mats, or armour in the sea, just as they came on to face our people: but finding this last resource to fail them, they soon dispersed, and left the beach entirely clear. It was an object they never neglected, even at the greatest hazard, to carry off their slain; a custom, probably, owing to the barbarity with which they treat the dead body of an enemy, and the trophies they make of his bones.

### **Taken from research by Peter T. Young:**

“Thus fell our great and excellent Commander!”

“After a life of so much distinguished and successful enterprise, his death, as far as regards himself, can be reckoned premature; since he lived to finish the great work for which he seems to have been designed; and was rather removed from the enjoyment, than cut off from the acquisition of glory.”

About eight o'clock, it being very dark, a canoe was heard paddling toward the ship; and as soon as it was seen, both the sentinels on deck fired into it. ... Luckily neither of them was hurt”. “After lamenting, with abundance of tears, the loss of Orono, he told us that he had brought us a part of his body.

He then presented to us a small bundle, wrapped up in cloth, which he brought under his arm ...” “... and it is impossible to describe the horror which seized us, on finding in it a piece of human flesh, about nine or ten pounds weight. This, he said, was all that remained of the body; that the rest was cut to pieces and burnt but that the head and all the bones, except what belonged to the trunk, were in the possession of Terreeoboo (Kalani'ōpu'u.”)

“This afforded an opportunity of informing ourselves, whether they were cannibals ; and we did not neglect it. We first tried, by many indirect questions, put to each of them apart, to learn in what manner the rest of the bodies had been disposed of ...” “... and finding them very constant in one story, that, after the flesh had been cut off, it was all burnt ; we at last put the direct question. Whether they had not ate some of it?” They immediately showed as much horror at the idea, as any European would have done and asked, very naturally, if that was the custom amongst us?” (Cook's Journal)

“The bodies of Captain Cook and the four men who died with him were carried to Kalani'ōpu'u at Maunaloia, and the chief sorrowed over the death of the captain.” “He dedicated the body of Captain Cook, that is, he offered it as sacrifice to the god with a prayer to grant life to the chief (himself) and to his dominion.” “Then they stripped the flesh from the bones of Lono. The palms of the hands and the intestines were kept; the remains (pela) were consumed with fire.” “The bones Kalani'ōpu'u was kind enough to give to the strangers on board the ship, but some were saved by the kahunas and worshiped.” (Kamakau)

“The bones were preserved in a small basket of wicker-work, completely covered over with red feathers; which in those days were considered to be the most valuable articles the natives possessed, as being sacred, and a necessary appendage to every idol, and almost every object of religious homage throughout the islands of the Pacific.” (Ellis)

“We learned from this person, that the flesh of all the bodies of our people, together with the bones of the trunks, had been burnt; that the limb bones of the marines had been divided amongst the inferior chiefs ...”

“... and that those of Captain Cook had been disposed of in the following manner the head to a great chief, called Kahoo-opeon; the hair to Maia-maia; and the legs, thighs, and arms to Terreeoboo.” (Cook's Journal)

There are stories about Cook's heart ... "The body of Captain Cook was carried into the interior of the island, the bones secured according to their custom, and the flesh burnt in the fire."

"The heart, liver, &c., of Captain Cook, were stolen and eaten by some hungry children, who mistook them in the night for the inwards of a dog. The names of the children were Kupa, Moho'ole, and Kaiwikoko'ole."

"These men are now all dead. The last of the number died two years since at the station of Lahaina. Some of the bones of Captain Cook were sent on board his ship, in compliance with the urgent demands of the officers; and some were kept by the priests as objects of worship." (Dibble)

Another notes, "Kealakekua is an historical spot. I write this in sight of the very rock where the celebrated Captain Cook was killed, and I have seen the man who ate his heart."

"He stole it from a tree, supposing it to be a swine's heart hung there to dry, and was horrified when he discovered the truth." (Judd)

"Eight days after the death of Captain Cook, friendly relations were resumed with those on board the ship."

"On Monday, February 23 (1779,) the ship sailed and it anchored at Kauai on the 29th of that month to get water and food supplies, then sailed to Ni'ihau and got a supply of yams, potatoes, and hogs."

"On March 15, the ship sailed into the blue and disappeared. This was the end of Captain Cook's voyages of exploration among these islands ...." (Kamakau)

"For several years after this melancholy event no ship visited the islands after Captain Cook." (Dibble)

**(Note)** *Capt. Clerke took over the command and in the summer of 1779 the expedition again tried unsuccessfully to penetrate the pack ice beyond Bering Strait. Clerke died in August 1779 and John Gore and James King commanded the ships on the voyage home via Macao and Cape Town. They reached London in October 1780.*

### **END – "Harbor Of Death – Captain James Cook"**



### About the Author

**Larry W Jones is a songwriter, having penned over 7,700 song lyrics. Published in 22 volumes of island themed, country, cowboy, western and bluegrass songs. The entire assemblage is the world's largest collection of lyrics written by an individual songwriter.**

**As a wrangler on the "Great American Horse Drive", at age 68, he assisted in driving 800 half-wild horses 62 miles in two days, from Winter pasture grounds in far NW Colorado to the Big Gulch Ranch outside of Craig Colorado.**

**His book, "The Oldest Greenhorn", chronicles the adventures and perils in earning the "Gate-to-Gate" trophy belt buckle the hard way, on the hurricane deck of a fiery red quarterhorse that proved what the term "prancing horse" really means!**





### **Other books published by Larry W Jones:**

1. A Squirrel Named Julie and The Fox Ridge Fox
2. The Painting Of A Dream
3. The Boy With Green Thumbs and The Wild Tree Man
4. Red Cloud – Chief Of the Sioux
5. Spotted Tail – The Orphan Negotiator
6. Little Crow – The Fur Trapper's Patron
7. Chief Gall – The Strategist
8. Crazy Horse – The Vision Quest Warrior
9. Sitting Bull - The Powder River Power
10. Rain-In-The-Face – The Setting Sun Brave
11. Two Strike – The Lakota Club Fighter
12. Chief American Horse – The Oglala Councilor
13. Chief Dull Knife – The Sharp-Witted Cheyenne
14. Chief Joseph – Retreat From Grande Ronde
15. The Oregon Trail Orphans
16. Kids In Bloom Volume 1
17. Kids In Bloom Volume 2
18. Kids Animal Pals Volume 1
19. Kids Animal Pals Volume 2
20. Bird Kids Volume 1
21. Bird Kids Volume 2
22. Garden Kids Volume 1
23. Garden Kids Volume 2
24. Folklore Of Jackson Hole
25. Henny Penny Meets Chicken Little
26. Delightful Stories For Children
27. The 1825 Voyage Of HMS Blonde
28. Illustrated Stories For Young Children
29. Sea Sagas – Perilous Voyages
30. Songbirds And Their Stories
31. The Jungle Book – Mowgli's Brothers
32. The Jungle Book – Kaa's Hunting
33. The Jungle Book – Tiger! Tiger!
34. The Jungle Book – The White Seal
35. The Jungle Book – Rikki-Tikki-Tavi
36. The Jungle Book – Toomai of the Elephants
37. The Jungle Book – Her Majesty's Servants
38. The Oldest Greenhorn – Second Edition
39. Life On The Mississippi
40. Songs Of The Seas
41. Treasure Island
42. The Wind In The Willows
43. Alice In Wonderland
44. Peter Rabbit
45. The Secret Garden
46. Heidi
47. Cynthia Ann Parker – Comanche Bride

### **Other books published by Larry W Jones:**

48. Black Beauty
49. The Call Of the Wild
50. Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit
51. Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea
52. The Goodnight-Loving Trail – A Chuckwagon Saga
53. Ode To Toulee – From Gosling To Goose
54. China Clipper – Floatplanes Of Pan Am
55. Images Of Old England
56. Range Of A Cowboy
57. Clipper Ships – Emigrants Passage
58. Clipper Ships – Wool and Wealth
59. Clipper Ships – Iron Maidens
60. Clipper Ships – The Kiwi Connection
61. Chief War Eagle – Peacemaker Of The Sioux
62. Ohiyesa – From Sioux To Surgeon
63. Indian Ways Of Yore – Fables And Fact
64. Heritage Of An Indian Boy
65. Daniel Boone On the Cumberland Trail
66. Davy Crockett Of the Wild Frontier
67. Jim Bowie – Life Legacy Legend
68. Sam Houston – Tennessee To Texas
69. Shackleton – Polar Quest
70. Death Valley Days – The Manly Trail
71. Pocahontas – Powhatan Princess
72. Tecumseh – The Roaming Cherokee
73. Hunga Tonga – The Volcano!
74. Otaheite 1769 – Log Of Captain Cook
75. How Texas Got Its Shape
76. First Nations – Eskimo
77. Pontiac and the Ottawa Wars
78. Last Of The Wampanoag
79. Osceola And The Seminole Sorrow
80. Squanto – The Patuxet Pilgrim
81. Wreck Of the Charles Eaton
82. Courthouses Of Texas
83. Mother Goose Rhymes – The Complete Collection
84. English Gardens – The Estates
85. Log Of Captain Bligh – Mutiny and Survival
86. Four Voyages Of Christopher Columbus
87. Expedition Of Cabeza de Vaca
88. Expedition Of Hernando de Soto
89. Expedition Of Coronado
90. Billy the Grizzly
91. Kidnapped – The Inheritance
92. Animal Friends Of the Timberlands
93. Chief Red Jacket – The Orator
94. Chief Black Hawk – Sauk Clan Leader

### **Other books published by Larry W Jones:**

95. The Pied Piper Of Hamelin
96. How Polynesia Became French
97. Texas Poisonous Snakes
98. Rocky Mountain Jim From Muggins Gulch
99. Buffalo Bill When The West Was Wild
100. Buffalo Jones – Saving the Yellowstone Bison
101. Calamity Jane – Woman Of the Western Plains
102. How To Tie Knots
103. Chief Manuelito – NAVAJO
104. Annie Oakley – Rimfire Cowgirl
105. Philippine History – From Magellan To Mindanao
106. Expedition Of Sieur de LaSalle
107. Comanche Moon Of Blanco Canyon
108. Rip Van Winkle – The Sleepy Dutchman
109. Michelangelo – Renaissance Man
110. Baldwin - King Of Locomotives
111. Winnie-The-Pooh and Friends He Knew
112. The Blue Lagoon Saga
113. Molly Finney - Capture Slavery Freedom
114. John Jacob Astor - Business Master
115. Mask Of The Lone Ranger
116. History Of Windsor Castle
117. The Port Royal 1692 Disaster
118. Day Of the Double Sun - The Manhattan Project
118. Riding Along the Salt Grass Trail
119. Day Of the Double Sun - The Manhattan Project
120. One Thousand And One Initial Letters
121. The Log Of Paul Bunyan – Master Woodsman
122. Rosewood 1923 - Smoke and Sorrow
123. Cofachiqui - Paramount Princess
124. Chief Powhatan - Tidewater Titan
125. Chief Shabbona – Bear Of Kankanee
126. Geronimo - The Nomad Apache
127. The Command Of Cochise
128. Titanic – A Survivor's Account
129. Abuse In Baltimore - The Archdiocese Exposed
130. Sand Creek Massacre - Chivington's Shame
131. The Yodeling Art Of Slim Whitman
132. Texas Rangers - The Making Of A Ranger
133. Texas Rangers - Clash With Indians
134. Texas Rangers - The Mason County War
135. Texas Rangers - The Outlaw Sam Bass
136. Texas Rangers - Fight With Apaches
137. Texas Rangers - Chief Victorio
138. Texas Rangers - Last Fight With Apaches
139. Texas Rangers - Last Scoutings
140. Concorde – On The Wings Of Time

### **Other books published by Larry W Jones:**

141. The Confessional - Illinois A.G. Report
142. Captains Courageous – Call Of The Grand Banks Cod
143. The Wilderness Canoe
144. Lifeboats Of Cape Cod - The Monomoy Disaster
145. Lady In the Strange South Seas
146. Perils Of the Sea - Ironclad Disasters
147. Bully Hayes the Blackbirder
148. Pike's Peak Gold Rush - One Miner's Account
149. Medieval Merchants Of the Hanseatic League
150. Hadrian's Wall - From Sea To Sea
151. Shipwrecked On the FeeJees
152. Pioneers Of the American West Vol I
153. Pioneers Of the American West Vol II
154. Pioneers Of the American West Vol III
155. Pioneers Of the American West Vol IV
156. Zane Grey - On Colorado Trails
157. Geronimo - His Words His Story His Life
158. Tramp Adrift - A Hobo's True Story
159. Rufus Perry – Texas Rangers
160. Voyage Of the Yacht Sunbeam
161. The Old Santa Fe Trail - Wagons Ho!
162. Life Among the Comanches and Apaches
163. HMS Pandora - In Search Of the Bounty
164. Hermit Of Suwarrow - Tom Neale's Atoll
165. Early Ranches Of New Zealand - A Settler's Story
166. Maori - Encountering Change
167. Uncle Tom Jones and Wild Tom
168. Digging Through Yukon Gold
169. The Great Smoky Mountains - Recapturing the Past
170. On the Santa Fe Trail In 1857
171. Hashknife Jones - Bloodlines 'n Kinship Ain't Thin Water
172. A Texas Cow Boy
173. Big-Foot Wallace Of the Texas Rangers
174. Napoleon Augustus Jennings – Texas Ranger
175. The Branding Pen - Roundup Of Cowboy Stories
176. Lindbergh – Lone Eagle Of Spirit Of St. Louis
177. Anchors Away To Botany Bay
178. Ballad Of Annie Laurie

All his publications are available on Lulu.com and book sellers worldwide.